

12 Sept 66

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In response to the  proposal for Pseude-GEM Breadboard and Experiment:

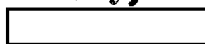
For the work which they propose, I believe the price to be reasonable; the work is sufficiently comprehensive to provide the basis for judgement. By the time they finish such a program, their GEMS should be sufficiently well-advanced to permit a comparison. On the basis of cost and technical worth, the proposal is sufficient.

The real problems, as we both knew, are not technical. We are faced with two decisions, as I see it:

1) The GEMS, as currently under study, have been shown to be of some value: we have already gotten a proved concept and are busy researching the last few questions leading to implementation. Do we duplicate the effort by another technique which perhaps is better, and are the answers already gained for the photographic GEMS applicable to the questions which the mechanical (optical) method will ask? Should we stop what we are doing now and try this new method, or do we let it run parallel? Is one really better than the other for its intended use? So here we must consider the problem of cost-effectiveness, duplication of effort, improved technical feasibility, etc.

2) Unless we hold back on other parts of the GEMS program, we must undergo a change of scope. This is politically difficult: it will take just as much time and paper-work as a full-fledged program. It is doubtful, considering the budget problems now in bloom, whether we could even get approval through the staff, let alone TDB, let alone the DDI, etc. Change of scope is exactly the category such a proposal falls into, but I'm doubtful if I've the nerve to suggest it.

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So I haven't helped much. If I were to choose technically, I'd say we ought to look into it for the sake of completeness:  would not suggest it unless there was some merit in it. Beyond this, however, the ultimately lower cost of implementing the procedure warrants a closer look. If I were to have to force it through the system as a change of scope, I would indeed look at it with a jaundiced eye. Depends on your nerve!

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Lots of luck.



Declass Review by NIMA/DOD

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